



Legislation Text

File #: 3231-2025, **Version:** 1

BACKGROUND: The purpose of this ordinance is to authorize a contract with Equitas Health to continue a partnership to support the community-wide comprehensive harm reduction program called Safe Point, in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.00 for a period of January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026.

Request for Quotation (RFQ025953) - Safe Syringe and Harm Reduction Services was posted on Bonfire to solicit bids for the Safe Syringe (Safe Point) program on September 21, 2023 through October 20, 2023 at 12pm. No vendors submitted bids by the October 20, 2023 12pm deadline. Following the conclusion of the RFQ025953 solicitation, Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS) contacted three potential vendors to directly secure bids and undertake reasonable measures to provide for competition among bidders. ADS contacted Equitas Health, Central Outreach Services, and Southeast Healthcare to directly solicit bids. Central Outreach opted not to submit a bid and Southeast Healthcare provided no response. Equitas Health was the only vendor to submit a bid from the three aforementioned vendors. Therefore, Equitas Health was awarded the Safe Syringe and Harm Reduction Services (Safe Point) contract. RFQ025953 indicated the contract renews annually dependent on funding availability through December 31, 2026 with the contract being issued for the calendar year January 1 to December 31.

Harm reduction services provided by Equitas Health allow clients who are at high-risk of accidental overdose death to access the lifesaving drug, Naloxone, and receive risk reduction counseling, referrals to Alcohol & Drug treatment, and overdose prevention education.

Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3707.57 states that the Board of Health has to approve/establish a blood borne infectious disease prevention program. A syringe exchange program is a blood borne infectious disease prevention program. At this time Columbus Public Health does not have the capacity to provide this service.

Emergency action is requested for this contract in order to ensure Columbus has an uninterrupted continuation of harm reduction program services to save lives.

FISCAL IMPACT: The funds (\$350,000.00) for this contract with Equitas Health are budgeted within the Health Opioid Recovery Fund.

To authorize the Board of Health to enter into a contract with Equitas Health to continue to provide a harm reduction program, called Safe Point, from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026; to authorize the expenditure of \$350,000.00 from the Health Opioid Recovery Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$350,000.00)

WHEREAS, the Board of Health has a need to continue to provide support and expand a community-wide comprehensive harm reduction program, Safe Point; and

WHEREAS, Equitas Health has the necessary experience and expertise to provide said services; Now, therefore,

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of Columbus Public Health in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Board of Health to contract with Equitas Health to allow services to proceed without delay in order to ensure Columbus has an uninterrupted continuation of harm reduction program services to save lives and for the

immediate preservation of the public health, peace, property, safety and welfare; and **NOW, THEREFORE**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That the Board of Health is hereby authorized and directed to enter into a contract with Equitas Health to continue to provide support and expand a community-wide comprehensive harm reduction program, Safe Point, in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.00.

SECTION 2. That to pay the costs of said contract, the expenditure of \$350,000.00 is hereby authorized from the Health Opioid Recovery Fund, Fund No. 2210, Department of Health, Division No. 5001, per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. This contract is being awarded in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 329 of the Columbus City Code dealing with awarding not-for-profit service contracts.

SECTION 4. That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

SECTION 5. That for reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.